

Application No. 10/510,293
Docket No. 77191.21900
Customer No. 30734

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Patent

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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A system for loading and unloading loose cargo in a cargo hold, of a plane, comprising:

transport means provided in the cargo hold covering an area of a floor of the cargo hold for intermittently conveying the loose cargo in a conveying direction towards an inner end of the cargo hold during loading, and away from it during unloading, with a front end of said transport means reaching into a range of a cargo hold opening inside the fuselage, and

a separate external conveyor organ provided on a tarmac [[connecting to]] adapted to reach into the cargo hold opening on the outside of the plane for transporting the loose cargo between the level of the tarmac and the cargo hold opening,

wherein between a plane-side end of said external conveyor organ and the front end of said transport means in the cargo hold at least one separate intermediate conveyor means is arranged, the intermediate conveyor means bridging the separate conveyor organ and the transport means provided in the cargo hold, whereby during loading, the loose cargo may initially be conveyed deeper into the fuselage in a direction transversal to the longitudinal axis of the plane, and subsequently be conveyed in the longitudinal direction of the plane and deposited on the front end of said transport means in the cargo hold, and whereby during unloading, loose cargo conveyed beyond the front end of said transport means into the plane of the cargo hold opening may be transported off transversely to the longitudinal axis of the plane through the cargo hold opening, wherein the loose cargo may be deposited on said transport means in the cargo hold during loading and transported away from said transport means during unloading,

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wherein said intermediate conveyor means comprises at least one first conveyor organ adapted to be modifiable in length in the conveying direction, for receiving the loose cargo in the range of the cargo hold opening from the plane-side end of said external conveyor organ and conveying it on transversely to the longitudinal axis of the plane during loading wherein the plane side end of the external conveyor organ inside the fuselage is followed by a second conveyor organ, having a conveyor belt, which receives the loose cargo from said first conveyor organ and conveys it in the longitudinal direction of the plane to the front end of said transport means present in the cargo hold, wherein said second conveyor organ of said intermediate conveyor means is mounted slidably relative to said first conveyor organ thereof, transversely to the longitudinal axis of the plane, [[and wherein said second conveyor organ is adapted to be modifiable in length in the longitudinal direction of the plane]].

2 – 4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein said transport means in the cargo hold is a transport carpet.

6 – 20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A system for loading and unloading loose cargo in a cargo hold, of a plane, comprising:

transport means provided in the cargo hold covering an area of a floor of the cargo hold for intermittently conveying the loose cargo in a conveying direction towards an inner end of the

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cargo hold during loading, or away from it during unloading, wherein a front end of said transport means reaches into a range of a cargo hold opening inside a fuselage, and

a separate external conveyor organ provided on a tarmac [[connecting to the outside of the plane at]] adapted to reach into the cargo hold opening for transporting the loose cargo between the level of the tarmac and the cargo hold opening,

wherein between a plane-side end of said external conveyor organ and the front end of said transport means in the cargo hold at least one separate intermediate conveyor means is arranged, the intermediate conveyor means bridging the separate conveyor organ and the transport means provided in the cargo hold, whereby the loose cargo may during loading initially be conveyed deeper into fuselage substantially transversely to the longitudinal axis of the plane, and

whereupon the loose cargo may then be rotated manually in the cargo hold and transported further substantially in the longitudinal direction of the plane and deposited on the front end of said transport means in the cargo hold, and

whereby during unloading, loose cargo conveyed beyond the front end of said transport means out of the cargo hold opening may be transported off substantially transversely to the longitudinal axis of the plane through the cargo hold opening, wherein the loose cargo may be deposited on said transport means in the cargo hold during loading and transported away from said transport means during unloading, wherein said intermediate conveyor means comprises at least one first conveyor organ [[adapted to be modifiable in length in the conveying direction,]] for receiving the loose cargo in the range of the cargo hold opening from the plane-side end of said external conveyor organ and conveying it on transversely to the longitudinal axis of the plane during loading and unloading, wherein the plane side end of the external conveyor organ

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inside the fuselage is followed by a second conveyor organ, having a conveyor belt, which receives the loose cargo from said first conveyor organ and conveys it in the longitudinal direction of the plane to the front end of said transport means present in the cargo hold, wherein said second conveyor organ of said intermediate conveyor means is mounted slidably relative to said first conveyor organ thereof, transversely to the longitudinal axis of the plane [[, and wherein said second conveyor organ is adapted to be modifiable in length in the longitudinal direction of the plane]].

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 21, wherein an end of said intermediate conveyor means facing the front end of said transport means in the cargo hold is adjustable in height relative to a beginning of said intermediate conveyor means facing said external conveyor organ.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 21, wherein a leading portion of said intermediate conveyor means is oriented at a predetermined angle of inclination, said

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predetermined angle of inclination is between 10° to 30°, with the angle of inclination of said external conveyor organ.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 21, wherein parts of the supporting structure of said intermediate conveyor means are manufactured of aluminum or fiber composites.

30 – 60. (Cancelled)